



United States Department of Agriculture

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE  
[www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov)

*"Solving Problems for the Growing World"*

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Announcement Number:** ARS-X6E-0012  
Demo/Alternative Merit  
Promotion

**Position Title/Series/Grade:**

Animal Caretaker  
WG-5048-05/06

**Promotion Potential:** WG-6

**Employment Type:** Full-time - Permanent

**Grade and Salary Range:**

WG-05 \$14.97 - \$17.47 Per Hour  
WG-06 \$16.35 - \$19.08 Per Hour

**Location of Position:**

Research Support Services, Animal Parasitology Unit,  
Beltsville, Maryland

**Who Can Apply:** (You **must** include a statement in your application that you are a U.S. citizen to be considered for this position): All U.S. Citizens (Local Commuting Area Only)

**Opening Date:** October 24, 2005

**Closing Date:** November 14, 2005

For copies of vacancy announcements and/or application materials, please call (301) 504-1482. For additional information regarding employment opportunities, please visit <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/jobs/apply.htm>.

**Contact Information**

**Human Resources Specialist:**

Judy Harrington/Joanne Kennedy  
(301) 504-1358

**DC Relay Service:** (202) 855-1234 (TDD)

**Send Applications to:**

USDA, Agricultural Research Service  
Human Resources Division  
Attn: Joanne Kennedy  
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop 5104  
Beltsville, MD 20705-5104

**Fax:** (301) 504-1535

**E-mail:** [scirecruit@ars.usda.gov](mailto:scirecruit@ars.usda.gov)

Applications must be postmarked, e-mailed or faxed by the closing date of the announcement. Applications received in Government envelopes will not be considered.

Please take advantage of the Application Package Checklist at the end of this announcement to ensure your application is complete.

For information about the organization and location, visit the location's website at <http://staffonly.ba.ars.usda.gov/supportServ/>

**Applications will also be accepted from USDA Surplus and Federal Displaced Employees in the commuting area.**

**A PRE-EMPLOYMENT PHYSICAL IS REQUIRED.  
MUST HAVE A VALID DRIVERS LICENSE.  
AALAS TRAINING IS REQUIRED.**

**Major Duties:**

This position is located in the Animal Parasitology Unit of the Research Support Services, Beltsville, Maryland. Incumbent of this position is responsible for the feeding, propagation and general maintenance of animals (cattle, sheep, swine, poultry, small animals, etc.) being raised for scientific experiments with animal diseases or parasitic conditions. Incumbent is responsible for animals that are infected with Bio Level 2 organisms which require special care and handling to avoid contaminating non-infected animals and humans. Incumbent feeds animals in accordance with specific instructions under protocol regarding diets; cleans and disinfects barns, pens and other animal shelters; restrains animals during experimental work in a safe and calm manner; keeps required records; observes animals for signs of abnormal conditions, heat, and insures animals are bred in a timely manner. Incumbent directly administers medicines by injection; castrates, docks, and/or dehorn animals as directed; opens carcasses preparatory to experimental work and assists in collecting animal samples; assists in slaughtering animals as directed; performs grounds maintenance such as mowing, spraying fence rows, discing, harrowing, hauling, and spreading manure; operates 1 ton trucks, tractors and other mechanical equipment in close quarters.

**Working Conditions and Other Considerations:**

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:** Work requires lifting and carrying feed and other materials weighing up to 80 pounds. Great physical effort and ability are required in handling and restraining animals. The incumbent makes frequent movements of arms and legs to manipulate tractor controls and equipment controls.

**WORKING CONDITIONS:** Works in closely confined rooms and areas or in outside areas. Works under all weather conditions or in situations when temperature variance is considerable. Subject to manure, urine, dust, odors, chemicals, etc. Incumbent works with zoonotic and experimental infectious agents in animals. There is also a greater degree of exposure to injury from bites and kicks since incumbent personally handles sick or ill-natured animals. Incumbent is subject to danger of falls on damp, wet, and slippery barn floors. Subject to injury from equipment and vehicle operation.

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE:** Applicants will be required to complete a supplemental questionnaire. The questionnaire ☒ IS ATTACHED ☐ WILL BE MAILED AT A LATER DATE. Applicants who fail to complete and return the questionnaire will NOT receive further consideration for the position.

**CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:** This is an exigency position: employee must report to or remain on work site regardless of extreme weather or other emergency conditions or budget shutdowns.

**PHYSICAL EXAMINATION IS:**

☒ required.

☐ not required

**CERTIFICATION/LICENSE REQUIREMENTS:** All applicants **MUST** indicate possession of the following certifications/licenses.

**MUST POSSES A VALID STATE DRIVER'S LICENSE** and a CDL if operating a vehicle exceeding 26,000 GVW on public roads. Applicants who fail to document possession of a valid license will not receive consideration for the position.

May be required to obtain Incinerator Operator certification from the state of Maryland.

**Qualifications Required:** Your education and experience will be evaluated against all qualification requirements (basic and any additional requirements) listed below.

**Basic Requirements**

1. ABILITY TO DO THE WORK OF AN ANIMAL CARETAKER WITHOUT MORE THAN NORMAL SUPERVISION (SCREEN OUT ELEMENT).
2. Ability to observe animals.
3. Ability to follow animal care procedures.
4. Ability to handle animals.
5. Ability to keep records and make reports.

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOLLOWS.**

## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE -- ANIMAL CARETAKER

Vacancy Announcement # \_\_\_\_\_

**Answers may be written on this form or on separate sheets of plain or lined paper.**

### **ELEMENT 1: ABILITY TO DO THE WORK OF AN ANIMAL CARETAKER WITHOUT MORE THAN NORMAL SUPERVISION. (SCREEN-OUT ELEMENT)**

1. Describe any animal care duties you have performed, include type and number of animals you cared for.

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2. Describe any special animal care provided, agility of animals, your knowledge of their feeding habits, reproduction, and problems encountered in your care of the animals.

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3. State the job you held in which you worked with the least amount of supervision and the greatest degree of initiative or independence. This job does not have to be in the field of animal care.

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### **ELEMENT 2: ABILITY TO OBSERVE ANIMALS**

1. What unusual behavior or abnormal appearance have you observed in animals? For example, list the types of symptoms and changes you have detected in breeding, sick, or pregnant animals.

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2. Have you ever helped anyone else learn to recognize changes in health, appearance, or behavior of animals?

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### **ELEMENT 3: ABILITY TO FOLLOW ANIMAL CARE PROCEDURES.**

1. Have you ever had to decide, on an emergency basis, what action to take with animals that were fighting, had escaped, or were ill?    ☐ NO    ☐ Yes    Describe what you did.

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2. State any experience you have in selecting proper feed for animals according to their age or condition.

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3. In your care of animals, state how you followed specific schedules (examples: feeding animals at specific times; and cleaning barns, grounds, pens, etc.?) Did you establish the schedule to follow or did you follow a schedule already established by someone else?

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4. If you have not actually followed schedules or interpreted instructions as you care for animals, describe any other experience where you followed other types of instructions or schedules?

in your work            ☐ YES ☐ NO  
in a classroom        ☐ YES ☐ NO  
in a laboratory        ☐ YES ☐ NO

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

5. Tell about any work you did where you had to observe safety rules to avoid injuring yourself or others.

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6. Have you:

mixed feed types & rations?    ☐ YES ☐ NO  
used chemical on animals?    ☐ YES ☐ NO  
used chemical in diets?        ☐ YES ☐ NO  
collected samples?            ☐ YES ☐ NO  
operated a ½ - 1 ton truck?    ☐ YES ☐ NO  
operated a tractor?            ☐ YES ☐ NO  
operated a silo unloader?      ☐ YES ☐ NO

**For each Yes, explain why in a separate piece of paper.**

7. Have you had any accidents on the job within the past year? YES\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_

IF Yes, explain.

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#### **ELEMENT 4: ABILITY TO HANDLE ANIMALS**

1. What work have you done that required you to handle animals? Tell about it in detail. For example, did you restrain animals while they were being examined?

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2. Which animals have you worked with and in which situations?

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3. Under what conditions have you maintained control of animals - in cages, enclosed yards, open field, etc.?

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4. Have you ever been injured in the course of caring for animals? Have any of these animals under your care been injured? If so, tell about it.

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#### **ELEMENT 5: ABILITY TO KEEP RECORDS AND MAKE REPORTS**

1. Have you kept any type of records on the health of animals? ☐ NO ☐ YES What types of records/reports did you keep? On what job (or in what class/volunteer experience) did you do record keeping?

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2. Did you assist someone in keeping health records on animals under treatment?

☐ NO ☐ YES, who? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you used any of the following measuring instruments?

weighing devices	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
mechanical scrapers	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
feed measurement tools	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
collection equipment for;	
blood	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
urine	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
feces	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
rumen	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

**If you collected any of the above, what was done with the body or waste products and specimens?**

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4. List other measuring equipment, tools, or instruments you used for routine, medical, or experimental purpose.

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5. List instruments, equipment, or farm equipment you have repaired, adjusted, or calibrated.

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6. Have you ever had to explain/interpret forms or written instructions in your experience with animals? ☐ NO  
☐ Yes, Tell about it

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7. If you have not actually kept reports or followed instructions concerning animal care, tell about any reports or instructions you have worked with in other areas (on a separate piece of plain lined paper).

8. Have you have any formal safety training or licensing courses? ☐ NO ☐ YES, Give dates and number of class hours.

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**I CERTIFY THAT I POSSESS A VALID STATE MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENSE**

**YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you have a CDL? \_\_\_\_\_YES \_\_\_\_\_ No**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Other Important Information**

### **Benefits Package:**

A Benefits Package is authorized for this position. Additional information about Federal benefits can be obtained at [www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm).

### **Veteran's Preference:**

For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 703-724-1850 or TDD 978-461-8404. Select General Information on the Federal Employment Policies and Procedures, and then Veterans Preference and Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans. Visit their VetGuide website at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>.

### **Relocation Expenses:**

Payment of relocation expenses will be determined in accordance with P&P 412.5, Recruitment and Retention Incentives and Other Special Pay, Sections 6 and 7, as amended by Bulletins 03-402 and 05-412.5, which may be found at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/412-05.htm#H10>. See also [http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing\\_recruit/reloweb.htm](http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing_recruit/reloweb.htm).

### **Financial Disclosure Requirement:**

Federal employees are subject to prohibitions against officially dealing with outside organizations in which they have a financial interest. You may be required to submit a financial disclosure report if hired for this position.

### **False statements:**

If you make a false statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; may be fired after beginning work; or may be fined or jailed.

### **Optional Form 306, (Declaration for Federal Employment):**

If you are selected for this position, you will be required to complete this form before an offer may be made.

### **USDA Surplus/Federal Displaced Employees:**

USDA Surplus/Federal displaced employees must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well qualified surplus and displaced employees within the local commuting area will receive selection priority as provided by OPM regulations. Well-qualified means the applicant meets the basic qualification and eligibility requirements and all selective placement factors; is rated above minimally qualified against the KSAs or quality criteria; and is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry. Applicants must submit the following:

- 1) a copy of your RIF Separation Notice or Certification of Expected Separation or other documentation indicating that you are a surplus employee;
- 2) evidence of full performance level of current position;
- 3) a copy of your most recent performance appraisal; and
- 4) a copy of your most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, to verify reassignment eligibility.

### **Selective Service System:**

Males over age 18 who were born after December 31, 1959, must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for Federal employment.



**Reasonable Accommodation:**

Reasonable accommodation is provided to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, or have questions regarding reasonable accommodation and/or accessibility for any part of the application and hiring process, please contact the Disability Program Manager on 202-720-6161 or through the DC Relay Service on 202-855-1234 (TDD). The decision to grant reasonable accommodation is made on a case-by-case basis.

**Civil Rights Policy Statement:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity employer and provider. Discrimination is prohibited in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center on 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

**To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD).**

## Application Package Checklist

**If application packages do not contain all of the requested information, you may lose consideration for the job. To help you ensure your application fully outlines your qualifications and eligibility for this position, please submit the following documentation.**

- ☐ Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment), SF-171 (Application for Federal Employment), Resume, Curriculum Vitae, or other document outlining your qualifications (Go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to obtain the OF-612).

**The following information is required of all applicants:**

- ☐ Announcement number, title, and grade(s) of the position
- ☐ Full name, mailing address (including zip code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)
- ☐ Social security number
- ☐ Statement that you are a U.S. citizen (if not using the OF-612 or SF-171)
- ☐ Copy of DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) if claiming veterans preference. Visit <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp> for additional information.
- ☐ SF-15 (Application for 10-point Veteran's Preference) plus the support documentation required by this form (if claiming 10-point veterans preference) (Go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.asp> to obtain form.)
- ☐ Paid and non-paid work experience related to the position. For each period of work experience include:
  - \_\_\_ Job title
  - \_\_\_ Series/grade (if Federal employment)
  - \_\_\_ Duties and accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Employer's name and address
  - \_\_\_ Supervisor's name and contact information
  - \_\_\_ Starting and ending dates of employment (at least month & year)
  - \_\_\_ Number of hours worked per week
  - \_\_\_ Salary
  - \_\_\_ Indicate if we may contact current supervisor/employer
- ☐ Other job related information, such as training courses (title & year); skills (e.g., other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, etc.)
  - \_\_\_ Certificates/licenses (current)
  - \_\_\_ Honors, awards, and special accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Supplemental questionnaire if applicable (usually for Federal Wage System positions - WG, WL, WS)
- ☐ Copy of college transcripts (if qualifying all or in part on the basis of education for this position) (If you have non-conventional education, e.g., foreign study, continuing education units, life experience, etc., go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e4.htm#e4a> and look under the heading "Other Education" for information governing acceptability of this type of education.)

- ☐ Copy of SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action) to verify possession of competitive civil service status (if you are a current or previous federal employee)
- ☐ Copy of most recent performance appraisal (if you are a current federal employee)
- ☐ Second copy of application package (if the position is open to candidates outside the federal government AND if you are a current federal employee or a candidate with reinstatement eligibility and wish to be considered under both merit promotion and competitive examining procedures).
- ☐ Support documentation for eligibility for special hiring authorities, such as disability, Peace Corps service, etc. (If you have questions about whether you are eligible for a particular hiring authority, please call the servicing HR specialist or visit the web site at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/a2.htm> and scroll down to the subject heading, "Category".)
- ☐ Support documentation if you are a USDA surplus or federal displaced employee (See pertinent section under "Other Important Information" below.)
- ☐ Self-certification of typing speed (if required as a basic qualification for the position)
- ☐ While not required, a separate response to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs listed under Specialized Experience) and Selective Placement Factor(s), if present, for this position may better highlight your specific qualifications for this position. (For an explanation of KSAs, go to the web site at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers/whatksa.html> ).

**If this is your first time applying for a federal job, or if you wish to view more detailed information about various aspects of applying for federal jobs, go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to access the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Form 510.**